

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

This Document contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States, within the meaning of Title 18, Sections 793 and 794, of the U.S. Code, as amended. Its transmission or revelation of its contents to or receipt by an unauthorized person is prohibited by law. The reproduction of this form is prohibited.

SECRET

25X1

COUNTRY Germany (Berlin)

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

25X1

SUBJECT The Taegliche Rundschau

DATE DISTR. 22 July 1953

NO. OF PAGES 4

25X1

DATE OF INFO. [REDACTED]

REQUIREMENT NO. [REDACTED]

25X1

PLACE ACQUIRED [REDACTED]

REFERENCES [REDACTED]

25X1

1. The Taegliche Rundschau (TR), the official paper of the SKK in Berlin, is directed by the Foreign Ministry of the USSR through a Russian staff actually working on the paper in its Berlin offices. Salaries of the Russian staff are carried on the budget of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. All other expenses, including salaries of German staff and printing costs, are carried on a so-called German budget. Deficits are made up by proceeds from the work of the workman of the associated printing establishment, Druckerei Friedrichshain. These deficits have been increasing steadily with a drop in circulation from 480,000 to 220,000, of which 20,000 are returned. To prevent any further drop an agreement was made with the Postal Ministry whereby the Ministry contracted to distribute through its outlets 200,000 copies. The chief reason for the large drop in circulation is the competition of Neues Deutschland (ND). All party members are required to subscribe to it, and it also has an agreement with the Postal Ministry -- more advantageous, apparently, than the TR's -- that it will get preferred handling, a fact which makes it possible for the ND to get fresher news to its readers than the TR. Furthermore, the ND actually receives party news before the TR.
2. During the past winter the TR underwent a transformation. Previously it had represented exclusively the views of the SKK and, consequently, it frequently criticized personalities in the DDR. This practice has now ceased. In fact, the TR now seems to be changing into the official governmental organ, playing the role of Izvestia, while the ND, as the party organ is the DDR's Pravda. It cannot be said that this division of spheres is the result of any agreement; nevertheless, the TR has made no effort to obtain the same priority as the ND in obtaining party news.
3. Work begins with a morning conference at which the coming edition is discussed, particularly editorials and feature articles. At a later conference at 11:30, the TR representative on the ZK press committee, who is a trusted party member (Horst Lehmann alternating with Richard Gladewitz), outlines the directives governing the treatment of current news events. These directives are generally superficial, inexact, and dangerously over-simplified to make them fit the Party line. This is followed by a discussion of the previous day's edition. This

SECRET

STATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARMY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NAVY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AIR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FBI		AEC					
-------	--	--	---	---	--	-----	--	--	--	--	--

(Note: Washington Distribution Indicated By "X"; Field Distribution By "#".)

25X1

BEST COPY
Available

SECRET

25X1

- 2 -

discussion is usually characterized by a considerable amount of self-criticism. Finally, plans for the forthcoming edition are gone over in the light of directives emanating from the ZK. This conference lasts so long -- two or three hours -- that little or no "hot" news can be put in the DLR edition (out at 5:15 P.M.). Consequently it consists mostly of items culled from the previous Berlin edition (out at 11:45 P.M.) Items which are written in the afternoon cannot be submitted to the Soviet staff for approval until they have reached the proof stage, as the Russians take lunch from two to four. Naturally, when they return there is little time left for making corrections, so the TR often appears without a lead editorial. Very few manuscripts, and only those on very critical subjects, go to Karlshorst for review. When they do, their publication is held up for a day or more. Items written in Karlshorst under the signature of O. Schmidt, K. Starke, and (formerly) Orlov, the pseudonym of Kirsanov, come to the TR in Russian and merely have to be translated.

4. Duty editors, on both the Russian and the German side, are held responsible for all errors of omission or commission. Thus, when the phrase "Union of anti-Soviet Women" instead of "Union of anti-Fascist Women" appeared, an investigation was ordered of the Russian editor who checked on all corrections. Because of solidarity in the composing room it was impossible to find the guilty person, but the nervousness caused by the episode continued for weeks, particularly among members of the Soviet staff. The German staff is, of course, completely subordinate to the Soviet staff which reads all proofs, makes any changes which appear necessary, or throws out items of a questionable nature. Three hours are required to obtain the Soviet imprimatur for the editorial page, somewhat less for news pages. The latter require only stylistic changes, as most of the items come from ADN. Dispatches from correspondents of the TR, however, are gone over very carefully and are extensively altered.
5. The work standard in the editorial offices of the TR is very low. Many of the staff members have had little or no journalistic training and some cannot even write correct German. Furthermore, party duties and other extra-curricular activities make it impossible for many to be present for duty, except very occasionally. Even some stenographers cannot take shorthand. The real work is done by a small group of persons who are on duty up to 14 hours per day. These include non-party members, who are able to keep their positions only because of their industry, and young journalists just out of school. Staff workers are seldom discharged and only for grave reasons. The familiar "Du" is used as form of address except among the older workers who use the expression "colleague so-and-so". The Russians also consistently use this expression despite the fact they they are addressed by zealous German party members as "Genosse".
6. There is a Soviet as well as a German restaurant in the establishment. The distinction is meaningless--except for the price per meal, 3.70 DM Soviet, .50 DM German -- as anyone can eat in either. Because of the long hours most of the staff employees take all their meals in the plant. This comes to about 10.00 DM per day, mostly consumed in the Soviet restaurant as the other is considered bad and is the subject of frequent complaints.
7. During recent months the SED has gradually increased its power within the plant. It has been able to do so principally because of the growing importance of the shop union, which has now a full-time paid secretary, Stiebitz. Both party and shop union are interested in all activities within the plant and Stiebitz settles whatever difficulties may arise. He works closely with other shop unions and exchanges information with them on employees. Under Stiebitz a secret plant police has been organized. Stiebitz is frequently received in private by the Russian chief editor Sokolov. He controls all "democratic" institutions in the plant. Incidentally, all members of the shop union belong to the SED; this was formerly not the case. Stiebitz's influence also extends to the Journalists' Association of which Rudolf Reinhardt is the head. Reinhardt, in fact, does nothing without consulting Stiebitz. Personnel policy is made by Stiebitz working with the former honorary secretary of the shop union, Horst Lehmann, and Richard Gladewitz.
8. The entire plant is directly under the control of the Russian editor in chief, Sokolov. Then the head publisher, Batenin, is here little more than a subordinate financial official. The editor in chief issued orders to his establishment in strict military form. On the German side, head bookkeeper Bachmann is the most important figure. He appears to have access to information which

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

is not available to members of the German editorial staff.

9. The principal headaches of the plant are the Rundschau am Montag and the Illustrierte Rundschau. The former is published simply to keep up with the Vorwaerts am Montag of the ND. It has no street sale but is sent free to all TR subscribers. Its tone is kept at the lowest possible level. Its contributors are badly paid and it economizes to the maximum both in personnel and in printing. As for the IR, it has recently been placed under the editorship of Prof. Margritz, not a professional newspaperman but the so-called "Kunstpapst" of East Berlin. Margritz, who directs Art and Culture sections of the TR, is also editor of Die Architektur and very active in party affairs. He champions the cause of "socialist realism" in all art. The TR also publishes the theoretical review of the SED, Neue Welt. Its editor is Stepanov who is assisted mainly by translators, as the review contains very little original German material. Circulation of the NW is 15,000, mostly party functionaries.
10. The printing plant with its 2000 employees is under the direction of Schroeder, many of the more highly skilled workers have gone over to the ND, where they receive confidential supplements in addition to a higher basic wage. Though there are many Communists on the force, a feeling of "Sozialdemokratismus" predominates and there is a high degree of solidarity among all workers. It was this feeling which apparently led to the establishment of the secret plant police force.
11. As the older and more experienced workers leave for more congenial employment it has been necessary to use type-setters who lack proper training. As a result errors are numerous, and 50% of all work has to be reset. This condition is aggravated by the fact that Russian supervisors are anxious to avoid mistakes and insist on numerous changes and on a high number of proofs. Production is consequently delayed all along the line. Deadlines are never met. Changes which elsewhere would take 15 minutes require up to an hour in the TR. The time consumed in molding mats, casting, and printing is extraordinarily long. Delays have made it necessary to set up a system of "reserve schedules". This results in news going stale. Every day the ND prints news items which the TR simply did not have time to handle.
12. Relations with Karlshorst are carried on exclusively by the editor in chief. He telephones hourly and goes there frequently during the course of the day. The Russian editors contribute practically no original material to the TR. They know how to make contact with outstanding personalities of the DDR, such as Pieck, Ulbricht, or Grotewohl at any time. In addition to his continuous contacts with Karlshorst, Sokolov is in close touch with Moscow. He telephones to the Foreign Ministry almost daily and on occasion flies there. He also works very closely with Fritz Lange of the SKK who uses the TR chiefly as an outlet for his passion as a historian. The different divisions of the TR maintain direct contact with the government, the ZK, and the mass organizations. The office of the editor in chief intervenes only when difficulties arise.
13. Contrary to the ND and the ADN, relations of the TR with non-Soviet foreign countries are decidedly bad. Although it has correspondents in Paris, London, Rome, and Stockholm, their salaries are held in Berlin and can only be drawn personally. The TR has no regular correspondents either in other People's Democracies or in West Berlin. Horst Heideck (a pseudonym) is the regular correspondent for West Germany. For most of its coverage of Germany, both East and West, the TR is obliged to draw on West Berlin papers or on ADN dispatches. It subscribes to no West German press service, while ND does. This paucity of information from the West is due not only to lack of funds but also to a well established policy -- which corresponds to the policy of the Soviet press -- not to permit journalists to have independent sources of information. Accordingly, everything which appears in the TR concerning the western zones is only of minor significance and relatively uninteresting. On this score the ND is far ahead of the TR.
14. The paper's political line is subject only to occasional change. The well known themes of Communist propaganda are mirrored again and again in the monthly and daily plans. In fact, since the policy of the paper is fully determined by the rigid ideology of Communism, the monthly plans are almost identical. It is an iron law that these plans must be carried out to the letter. But in actuality only departments dealing with Theory or Culture are able to keep

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

- 4 -

to the predetermined course. The political and economic plans are being continually superseded by events.

15. In the TR it is an absolute commandment that important speeches shall be given in extenso with no consideration whatever for readability. In this respect the TR is at a great disadvantage by comparison with other east-zone papers, which are less closely bound. Hence the drop in circulation of the TR.
16. When articles are rejected it is usually for purely political motives. Thus, for a long time while Eisler still seemed firmly in the saddle everything that he wrote was rejected by Sokolov without even being read. On the other hand, an article by Dertinger was published just a day or two before his arrest. In the one case the Soviet staff knew long in advance what was going to take place and in the other case it did not.
17. Criticism of Soviet policy, not in general but in the way it is executed in the TR, is very strong. The confusion caused by the Russian editorial staff, the exploitation of the German workers, relations with the ND, the daily make-up, and the first-page lay-out are the favorite topics. The feeling of discontent is also expressed in the strong inclination to drink and in personal disputes between co-workers. Only the exceptionally severe regulations against drinking prevent many workers from being habitually drunk on duty. Contrary to the general belief that Russians are heavy drinkers, Soviet staff members practically never indulge, though they are not anti-alcoholics.
18. Enmity between different groups and classes is expressed in many ways. Compositors speak spitefully of the "upstairs intelligentsia". Printers can tell immediately if journalists have any qualifications for their work. Party members receive little co-operation from the composing room. In the editorial staff party members unite against non-party members.

SECRET